

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LA PAZ 05533 132146Z

ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1617

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 5533

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, BL

SUBJ: ELECTORAL FRAUD: THE DEFENSES COLLAPSE

REF: LA PAZ 5497

1. ELECTORAL COURT PRESIDENT MANTILLA HAS NOW INDICATED TO THE VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR THAT HE IS IN A STATE OF PHYSICAL (AND MAYBE MORAL) COLLAPSE AND UNABLE TO SORT OUT THE FRAUDULENT RETURNS WITH WHICH THE COURT IS CONFRONTED. THE NEW RAW RETURNS FROM POTOSI WHICH MANTILLA HAS RELEASED WITHOUT REVIEW APPEAR RIGGED BY THE GOVERNMENT-APPOINTED DEPARTMENTAL COURT IN POTOSI. A CLEANED-UP RESULT COULD WELL GIVE BOTH LA PAZ AND POTOSI TO HERNAN SILES, SENDING THE ELECTION INTO THE CONGRESS. YESTERDAY'S PACT BETWEEN DILES, PAZ AND BERNAL HAS PROBABLY MADE THAT RESULT UNACCEPTABLE TO THE MILITARY (AND PEREDA) SINCE IT IMPLIES A THREE-PARTY COALITION IN THE CONGRESS WHICH COULD ELECT SILES PRESIDENT--AND THE ARMY LEADERSHIP NOW CONSIDERS SILES THEIR ENEMY.

2. THERE IS AN OUTSIDE CHANCE THAT ALL FOUR PARTIES MIGHT URGE MANTILLA TO CLEAN UP THE RESULT IF THIS WOULD LEAD TO OPEN COALITION NEGOTIATIONS AND NOT A CERTAINTY OF SILES AS PRESIDENT. THEREFORE, THE PHOENIX OF BOLIVIAN POLITICS, CONFIDENTIAL

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VICTOR PAZ, COULD INITIATE THIS PROCESS BY IMPLYING A WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER ALL COALITION POSSIBILITIES IF THE ELECTION RETURNS ARE CLEANED UP. AS OF NOW, HOWEVER, PAZ APPEARS TO BE SLAMMING THE DOOR. HE REFUSES TO TALK TO PEREDA WHO HAS BEEN DESPERATELY SEEKING NEGOTIATIONS WITH PAZ.

3. BOTH THE PEREDA FORCES AND LUIS ADOLFO SILES, APPARENTLY ON BEHALF OF SILES ZUAZO, HAVE ASKED ME HOW I THINK THE MESS SHOULD BE CLEANED UP. I HAVE SUGGESTED THAT ALL FOUR POLITICAL PARTIES STRONGLY APPEAL TO MANTILLA TO ANNUL ALL QUESTIONABLE BALLOTS AND THOROUGHLY REVIEW THE COUNT. MANTILLA DOES NOT NOW FEEL HE HAS THE BACKING NECESSARY TO CARRY THROUGH THIS BRUISING TASK. THIS COURSE IS NOW ONLY AN OUTSIDE CHANCE.

4. IF PEREDA'S WIN BY 50 PLUS PERCENT IS AUTHENTICATED, HE IS NOT GOING TO HAVE ADEQUATE AUTHORITY TO GOVERN WITHOUT REPRESSION. HE WILL PROBABLY, THEREFORE, SEEK A COALITION WITH PAZ OR BERNAL OR BOTH, EVEN IF HE GETS ELECTED DIRECTLY. SUCH A COALITION, WHILE NOT A SHINING RESULT, WOULD PRODUCE A BETTER GOVERNMENT AND MORE STABLE GOVERNING ENVIRONMENT THAN PEREDA ALONE.
BOEKER

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